

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4332

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 6242

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, SS, MO

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR BENNETT'S MEETING WITH MOROCCAN FOREIGN
MINISTER LARAKI, NOVEMBER 24

1. AT MOROCCAN REQUEST, AMBASSADOR BENNETT MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER LARAKI AT UNITED NATIONS, NOVEMBER 24. LARAKI DESCRIBED MEETING AS BEING PURSUANT TO THAT OF LAST WEEK IN WASHINGTON BETWEEN UNDER SECRETARY SISCO AND MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR BOUTALEB. LARAKI STRESSED GEO-POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF SPANISH SAHARA: THE ALGERIANS AND SOVIETS ARE VERY EAGER TO GAIN INFLUENCE IN THE SAHARA, ALONG WITH CURRENT SOVIET EFFORTS IN PORTUGAL AND ANGOLA, BOTH TO COMPENSATE FOR SETBACKS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. MOROCCO FINALLY SUCCEEDED IN CONVINCING SPAIN OF THIS THREAT, RESULTING IN THE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT OVER SAHARA.

2. LARAKI THEN TURNED TO QUESTION OF SPANISH SAHARA IN THE UNITED NATIONS. FOLLOWING LENGTHY MEETINGS, IT HAD BECOME APPARENT THAT A CONSENSUS DID NOT EXIST AMONG AFRICAN COUNTRIES CONCERNING SAHARA. IF ALGERIA, TANZANIA AND OTHERS, LARAKI REASONED, FAILED TO TABLE A RESOLUTION IN FOURTH COMMITTEE, MOROCCO WOULD NOT DO SO EITHER. IT WAS PROBABLY, HOWEVER, THAT TANZANIANS UNDER
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AMBASSADOR SALIM (WHOM LARAKI DESCRIBED CONTEMPTUOUSLY

AS "MR. SELF-DETERMINATION") WOULD PUT FORTH SUCH A DRAFT. THE DRAFT WOULD LIST PERTINENT RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE TERRITORY, AND CALL FOR A REFERENDUM. LARAKI COUNTED 50-ODD VOTES IN FAVOR (WE THINK THERE WOULD BE MORE.) BUT, LARAKI ARGUED, A REFERENDUM IN SAHARA WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO CONDUCT. FURTHER, A TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATION ALREADY IS IN PLACE.

3. LARAKI THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT THAT MOROCCO SEIZE INITIATIVE IN EVENT OF INDICATIONS THAT ALGERIANS, TANZANIANS OR OTHERS WERE ABOUT TO TABLE A RESOLUTION HOSTILE TO MOROCCAN INTERESTS. MOROCCO HAS IN MIND TABLING A RESOLUTION WHICH WOULD, IN ADDITION TO CITING PERTINENT RESOLUTIONS OF GA AND SC, TAKE NOTE OF THE "EVOLUTION" WHICH HAS OCCURRED IN THE TERRITORY AND CALL ON THE INTERIM ADMINISTRATORS TO RESPECT THE WISHES OF THE PEOPLE. HE ESTIMATED THAT AT LEAST 56 COUNTRIES WOULD SUPPORT SUCH A RESOLUTION. HE RESTRICTED HIMSELF TO ASKING TACTICAL ADVICE OF THE UNITED STATES AND MADE CLEAR HE WOULD LIKE OUR SUPPORT.

4. COMMENT: AS WE REPORTED EARLIER, AFRICANS MET OVER THREE-DAY PERIOD LAST WEEK AND WERE NOT ABLE TO REACH AGREEMENT ON FURTHER HANDLING OF SAHARAN ISSUE. IN CONVERSATION TODAY, LARAKI ADMITTED HE COULD ONLY COUNT NINE OR TEN POSITIVE VOTES FROM AFRICANS IN SUPPORT MOROCCAN POSITION ON SAHARA. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SOVBLOC AND THIRD WORLD RESPONSIVE TO SOVIETS WOULD BE AGAINST MOROCCANS BUT THOUGHT BULK OF ARABS WOULD EITHER SUPPORT MOROCCANS OR ABSTAIN ON ANY RESOLUTION. (HE PUT ONLY ALGERIA AND DEMOCRATIC YEMEN IN OPPOSITION CAMP.) HE ALSO ADMITTED HE WOULD LOSE A NUMBER OF CARIBBEAN VOTES. PROSPECTS, THEREFORE, DO NOT LOOK GOOD TO US FOR MOROCCANS, AND WE BELIEVE RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT ALGERIAN POSITION WOULD HAVE GREATER POSSIBILITY OF SUCCESS THAN MOROCCAN-SPONSORED INITIATIVE.

5. IN THAT CONNECTION, SALIM TOLD MISOFF LATER NOVEMBER 24 THAT AGREEMENT NOW REACHED ON TABLING ONLY ONE SAHARAN RESOLUTION. HE DID NOT VOLUNTEER DETAILS, AND WE WILL SEEK FURTHER INFORMATION. IT DOES NOT SEEM LIKELY FROM OUR TALK WITH LARAKI THAT THERE COULD BE AGREEMENT ON

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A RESOLUTION BETWEEN RADICAL AFRICANS AND MOROCCO.
MOYNIHAN

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